THE STRENGTH OF BEING MORALLY CLEAN

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A STUDY OF THE QUEST FOR UNEARNED HAPPINESS

A White Cross Address

BY

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THE STRENGTH OF BEING CLEAN.

A STUDY OF THE QUEST FOR UNEARNED HAPPINESS.

I WISH in this address to make a plea for sound and sober life. I base this plea on two facts: to be clean is to be strong; no one can secure happiness without earning it.

Among the inalienable rights of man — as our fathers have taught us — are these three: "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." So long as man is alive and free, he will, in one way or another, seek that which gives him pleasure, hence life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are in essence the same. But the pursuit of happiness is an art in itself. To seek it is not necessarily to find it, and failure may destroy both liberty and life. Of some phases of this pursuit I wish to speak to-day. My message is an old one. If by good chance some part of it is true, this truth is as old as life itself. And if it be true, it is a message that needs to be repeated many times to each generation of men.

It is one of the laws of life that each acquisition has its cost. No organism can exercise power without yielding up part of its substance. The physiological law of transfer of energy is the basis of human success and happiness. There is no action without expenditure of energy, and if energy be not expended, the power to generate it is lost.

This law shows itself in a thousand ways in the life of man. The arm which is not used becomes palsied. The wealth which comes by chance weakens and destroys. The good which is unused turns to evil. The charity which asks no effort "cannot relieve the misery she creates." The religion which another man would give us we cannot take as a gift. There is no Christliness without endeavour. The truth which another man has won from nature or from life is not our truth until we have lived it. Only that becomes real or helpful to any man which has cost the sweat of his brow, the effort of his brain, or the anguish of his soul. He who would be wise must daily earn his wisdom. The parable of the talents is the expression of this law, for he who adds not effort to power soon loses the power he had. The responsibility for effort rests with the individual. This need is the meaning of individuality, and by it each must work out his own salvation, with fear and trembling it may be sometimes, and all times with perseverance and patience.

The greatest source of failure in life comes from this. It is easier to be almost right than to be right; to wish, than to gain. In default of gold, there is always something almost as good, and which glitters equally. In default of possession, illusion can be had, and more cheaply. It is possession only which costs. Illusion can be had on easy terms, though the final end of deception is failure and misery. Happiness must be earned, like other good things, else it cannot be held. It can be deserved only where its price has been somehow paid. Nothing worth having is given away in this world, — nor in any other that we know of. No one rides dead-head on the road to happiness. He who tries to do so, never reaches his destination. He is left in the dumps.

It is probably too much to say that all of human misery can be traced to the dead-head habit. Misery has as many phases as humanity. But if we make this statement negatively, it will not be far from the truth. No one is ever miserable who would truly pay the price of happiness. No one is really miserable who has not tried to cheapen life.

The price which every good and perfect gift demands, we would somehow or other get out of paying. But we can never cheat the gods. Their choicest gifts lie not on the bargain counters. Our reward comes with our effort. It is part of the same

process. In this matter, man gets what he deserves, meted out with the justice of eternity.

In the sense in which I shall use these terms, sorrow and misery are not the same thing. They are not on speaking terms with each other. True sorrow, the pain of loss, is a hallowed suffering. "For ever the other left," is a necessity in a world which each one must leave as he entered it, — alone. And we would not have it otherwise, for there is in the nature of things no other possibility. So long as we live we must take chances. Sorrow is sacred. Misery is accursed. Sorrow springs from our relations to others. Misery we have all to ourselves. As real happiness is the glow which accompanies normal action, the reflex of the abundance of life, so is misery the shadow of dullness, the reflex of failing or morbid life. Misery is nature's protest against degeneration.

Human misery may be a symptom, a cause, or an effect. It is an expression of degeneration, and therefore a symptom of mental and spiritual decay. It is a cause of weakness and discouragement, and therefore of further degeneration and deeper misery. It is an effect of degeneration, and behind personal degeneration lies a multitude of causes. None of its causes are simple. Some are subjective, the visible signs of weak mind or mean spirit. Some are objective, the product of evil social conditions, to which

the weak mind or mean spirit responds to its further injury. None of these can be removed by any single social panacea. "The poor we have always with us," and there will always be those who shall show that "the way of the transgressor is hard." "The soul that sinneth it shall die," will not become a forgotten axiom so long as instability of will is a part of human nature.

When I was a boy I once had a primer which gave the names of many things which were good and many which were bad. Good things were faith, hope, charity, piety, and integrity, while anger, selfishness and trickery were rightly put down as bad. But among the good things, the primer placed "adversity." This I could not understand, and to this day I remember how I was puzzled by it. The name "adversity" had a pretty sound, but I found that its meaning was the same as "bad luck." How can bad luck be a good thing?

Now that I have grown older and have watched men's lives and actions for many years, I can see how bad luck is really good. Good or bad is not in the thing itself, but in how we take it. If we yield and break down under it, it is not good; but neither are we good. It is not in the luck, but in ourselves, that the badness is. But if we take hold of bad luck bravely, manfully, we may change it into good luck, and when we do so we make ourselves

stronger for the next struggle. It was a fable of the Norsemen, that when a man won a victory over another, the strength of the conquered went over into his veins. This old fancy has its foundation in fact. Whoever has conquered fortune has luck on his side for the rest of his life.

So adversity is good, if only we know how to take it. Shall we shrink under it, or shall we react against it? Shall we yield or shall we conquer? To react against adversity is to make fortune our servant. Its strength goes over to us. To yield is to make us fortune's slave. Our strength is turned against us in the pressure of circumstances. A familiar illustration of what I mean by reaction is this: Why do men stand upright? It is because the earth pulls them down. If a man yields to its attraction he soon finds himself prone on the ground. In this attitude he is helpless. He can do nothing there, so he reacts against the force of gravitation. He stands upon his feet, and the more powerful the force may be, the more necessary it is that the active man should resist it. When the need for activity ceases, man no longer stands erect. He yields to the force he has resisted. When he is asleep the force of gravitation has its own way so far as his posture is concerned. But activity and life demand reaction, and it is only through resistance that man can conquer adversity.

In like fashion temptation has its part to play in the development of character. The strength of life is increased by the conquest of temptation. We may call no man virtuous till he has won such a victory. It is not the absence of temptation, but the reaction from it, that ensures the persistence of virtue. If sin entice thee, consent thou not, and after awhile its allurements will cease to attract.

In every walk in life, strength comes from effort. It is the habit of self-denial which gives the advantage to men we call self-made. A self-made man, if he is made at all, has already won the battle of life. He is often very poorly put together. His education is incomplete; his manners may be uncouth. His prejudices are often strong. He may worship himself and his own oddities. But if he is successful in any way in life, he has learned to resist. He has learned the value of money, and he has learned how to refuse to spend it. He has learned the value of time, and how to convert it into money, and he has learned to resist all temptations to throw either money or time away. He has learned to say *no*. To say *no* at the right time, and then to stand by it, is the first element of success.

I heard once of a university (it may be in Tartary, or it may be in Dreamland) where the students were placed in a row, and each one knocked down every morning, to teach him self-control. By this means

he was made slow to anger. To resist wrath helps one to resist other impulses. There is a great value in the habit of self-restraint, even when self-gratification is harmless in itself. Some day self-denial will be systematically taught to children. It ought to be part of the training of men, not through statutes and regulations, but through the growth of severer habits. Whenever we say *no* to ourselves, we gain strength to say *no*, if need be, to others.

The Puritans were strong in their day, and their strength has been the backbone of our republic. Their power lay not in the narrowness of their creed, but in the severity of their practices. Much that they condemned was innocent in itself. Some things which they permitted were injurious. But they were ready to resist whatever they thought was wrong. In this resistance they found strength; and they found happiness, too, and somewhat of this strength and this happiness has fallen to our inheritance.

We may wander far from the creeds of our fathers; we may adopt far different clothing, and far other customs and practices. But if we would have the Puritan's strength, we must hold the Puritan's hatred of evil. Our course of life must be as narrow as his; for the way that leads to power in life must ever be strait and stony. It is still true, and will be true for ever, that the broad roads and

flowery paths lead to weakness and misery, not to happiness and strength. There is no real happiness that does not involve self-denial.

So there never was unearned happiness, yet thousands there be in quest of it, and some have thought for the moment that they held it in their grasp. The failure of this quest is the source of the great problems of society, — the labour problem, the temperance problem, the social evil, and the thousand others which vex civilised society; problems which can never be solved until each man shall solve his own for himself. Each pleasure that comes to us free from effort and free from responsibility turns into misery in our hands. Happiness comes from the normal exercise of life's functions in any grade, doing, thinking, fighting, overcoming, planning, loving. It is active, positive, strengthening. It does not burn out as it glows. Happiness leaves room for more happiness. Even war and strife make room for love. Love, too, is a positive word. Not love, — but loving. And loving brings happiness only as it works itself out into living action. The love that would end in no helping act and no purpose or responsibility is a mere torture of the mind.

The brain is the organ of consciousness, and therefore the seat of conscious happiness. Happiness is the signal, "All is well," that is passed from one nerve-cell to another. To choose among different

possible courses of action is the primary function of the intellect. To choose at all, implies the choice of the best. In the long run, only those who choose the best survive. The *best* each one must find out for himself. To choose the best is the art of existence. Of all the fine arts, this is the finest and noblest. By the *best* we mean that which makes for abundance of life, — for ourselves and for others. The best for to-day may not be the real best, as the best for self may not be the best for others, and if it is not best in the long run, it is not the best at all. The conciliation of duties to self with duties to others, of altruism with egoism, is again the art of life. To learn this art is to develop the greatest effectiveness, the most perfect self-realisation, and therefore the greatest possibility for happiness.

In the quest for happiness, effectiveness rather than pleasure must be the real object of pursuit. For effectiveness in a high sense will bring happiness, while many of the apparent pleasures of life are only the masks of misery. To the tendency to forsake normal effort to follow these, we give the name of temptation. Temptation resisted strengthens the mind and the soul. Not to escape temptation, but to master it, is the way to righteousness. Innocence is not necessarily virtue, and may be farther from it than vice itself. We may call no man virtuous till he has passed from innocence to the conquest of

temptation. Any fool may be innocent. It takes a wise man to be virtuous.

In a recent journal, Mr. William C. Morrow tells a story of a clergyman and a vagabond. They met by chance on the street, where the very incongruity of their lives drew them together. Each was tempted by the other. The young student of divinity, fresh from the seminary, in black broadcloth and unspotted necktie, seemed to the vagabond so pure, so clean, so innocent, that suddenly his soul arose in revolt against his past life, his vulgar surroundings, his squalid future. The inspiration of the unspoiled example gave him strength to resist. For a moment, at least, he threw off the chains which years of weakness had fastened upon him. The clergyman, on the other hand, found a fascination in sin. It seemed to come to him as an illumination of the realities of life, a contrast to a life of empty words and dry asceticism. All the yearning curiosity of his suppressed impulses called out for the freedom of the vagabond. His mouth watered for the untasted fruits of life. These unknown joys seemed to him the only joys there were. He had never known temptation, and hence had never resisted it. To his innocence, the cheap meanness of sin was not revealed.

As it chanced, so the story goes, when next the pair met, the vagabond and the minister, they had exchanged places. From the curbstone pulpit,

the vagabond spoke to his fellow sinners in words that burned, for they came from the fulness of his experience. He had met the Devil face to face, and could speak as one who knew him, and who would, if he could, cast off his horrid chains. As he went on with his harangue, the other came up, dishevelled of garment and unsteady of step, his speech reeking with foulness and profanity. The pleasures of sin were his for the season, and the policeman led him on to the city jail to sober up. There he would have leisure to cast up the account in the bitterness which follows unresisted temptation.

Perhaps this is not a true story, but its like is true every day. It is only the strength of past resistance that saves us from sin. If we know it and fight it, it will not take us unawares.

In the barber shop of a hotel in Washington, this inscription is written on the mirror: "There is no pleasure in life equal to that of the conquest of a vicious habit." This the barber keeps before him every day. It is no idle word, but the lesson of his life; a life of struggle against the temptation of self-indulgence.

In general, the sinner is not the man who sets out in life to be wicked. There are some such, fiends by blood and birth, but you and I do not meet them very often. The sinner is the man who cannot say *no*. For sin to become wickedness is a matter

of slow transition. One virtue after another is yielded up as vice calls for the sacrifice. In Kipling's fable of Parrenness, the slave of vice is asked to surrender one after another his trust in man, his faith in woman, and the hopes and conscience of his childhood. In exchange for all these, the demon left him just a little crust of dry bread.

It is because decay goes on step by step that bad men are not all bad, as good men are not wholly good. In the stories of Bret Harte, the gamblers and sots are capable of pure impulses and of noble self-devotion. The pathos of Dickens rests largely on the same kindly fact. It is indeed a fact, and those who would save such people should keep it constantly in mind.

I number among my friends, if he be living yet, which I doubt, an old miner, who has had a hard, wild life. He was a victim of drink, and the savage Keeley cure did not save him from delirium tremens. He walked from Los Gatos to Palo Alto for such help as might be found there. As he sat waiting in my house, a little child, who had never known sin, came into the room and fearlessly offered him his hand. This a grown man would not do without shrinking, but the child had not learned to be a respecter of persons. The scarred face lightened; the visions of demons vanished for a moment, and the poor man repeated almost to himself these words

of Dickens: "I know now how Jesus could liken the kingdom of God to a child."

The primal motive of most forms of sin is the desire to make a short cut to happiness. We yield to temptation because it promises pleasure without the effort of earning it. This promise is one which has never been fulfilled in all the history of all the ages, and it is time that men were coming to realise that fact. The happiness that is earned lasts to make way for more happiness. The unearned pleasures are mere illusions, and as they pass away, their final legacy is weakness and pain. They leave "a dark brown taste in the mouth;" their recollection is "different in the morning." Such pleasures, as Robert Burns, who had tried many of them, truthfully says, "are like poppies spread," or "like the snowfalls on the river."

But true happiness leaves no reaction. The mind is at rest within itself, and the consciousness is filled with the joy of living.

The short cuts to happiness which temptation commonly offers to you and to me, I may roughly divide into five classes:

1. *Indolence.* This is the attempt to secure the pleasures of rest without the effort that justifies rest and makes it welcome. When a man shuns effort, he is in no position to resist temptation. So, through all the ages, idleness has been known as

the parent of all the vices. "Life drives him hard" who has nothing in the world to do. The dry-rot of ennui, the vague self-disgust of those who cannot "deal with time," is the natural result of idleness. It is said that "the very fiends weave ropes of sand, rather than face pure hell in idleness." It is only where even such poor effort is impossible that absolute misery can be found. The indolent ennui of the hopelessly rich and the indolent misery of the helplessly poor have this much in common. The quest for happiness is become a passive one, waiting for the joy that never comes. But life can never remain passive. That only is passive which is dead, and all the many evils of life come through the open door of unresisted temptation.

2. *Gambling.* In all its forms gambling is the desire to get something for nothing. Burglary and larceny have the same motive. Along this line, the difference between gambling and stealing is one fixed by social customs and prejudices. The thief may be a welcome member of society if he is the right kind of a thief, and successful in keeping within the rules we have adopted for our game of social advancement. In society, money is power. It is the visible representation of stored up power, whether of ourselves or of others. It is said that the "love of money is the root of all evil." The love of money is the love of power. But it is not true that the love of power

is the root of all evil. To love power is natural to the strong. To wish for money is natural to him who knows how to use it. The desire to get money without earning it is the root of all evil. Only evil comes through the search for unearned happiness through unearned power. To get something for nothing, in whatever way, demoralises effort. The man who gets a windfall spends his days watching the wind. The man who wins in a lottery spends his gains in more lottery tickets. The man who loses in a lottery does the same thing. In all forms of gambling, to win is to lose, for the winner's integrity is placed in jeopardy. To lose is to lose, for the loser throws good money after bad, and that, too, is demoralising.

The appeal to chance, the spirit of speculation, whatever form it may take, is adverse to individual prosperity. It makes for personal degeneration and therefore for social decay.

3. *Licentiousness.* More wide-spread and more insidious than the quest for unearned power is the search for the unearned pleasures of love, without love's duties or love's responsibilities. The way to unearned love lies through the valley of the shadow of death. The path is white with dead men's bones.

Just as honest love is the most powerful influence for good that can enter into a man's life, so is love's counterfeit the most disintegrating. Love is a

sturdy plant of vigorous growth, with wondrous promise of flower and fruitage, but it will not spring from the ashes of lust.

In the economy of human life, love looks forward to the future. Its glory is in its altruism. The mother gives her life and strength to the care of the child, and to the building of the home. The father stands guard over the life and welfare of mother and child alike. To shirk responsibility is to destroy the home. The equal marriage demands equal purity of heart, and equal chastity of intention. Without this, "Sweet love were slain," and "Love is the greatest thing in the world," because it is the greatest source of happiness.

Not strife nor war nor hatred is love's greatest enemy. Love's arch foe is lust. To shirk the bonds of love for the irresponsible joys of lust is the Devil's choicest temptation. Open vice brings with a certainty disease and degradation. To associate with the vile is to assume their vileness, and this in no occult or metaphorical sense, either. Secret vice comes to the same end, but all the more surely, because the folly of lying is added to the other agencies of decay. The man who tries to lead a double life is either a neurotic freak, or else the prince of fools. Generally he is something of both at first, and at the last an irreclaimable scoundrel. That society is so severe in its condemnation of the double life is an

expression of the bitterness of its own experience. There is real meaning behind each of society's conventionalities. Its condemnation is never unreasoning, though it may lack in sense of proportion. "Even the angels," Emerson says, "must respect the proprieties." The basis of the proprieties of social life is that no man should shrink from the cost of that which he desires. It is not only the gross temptations which the wise man must resist. There is much that passes under other names which is only veiled licentiousness. The word flirtation covers a multitude of sin. To breathe the aroma of love, in pure selfishness, without an atom of altruistic responsibility, is the motive of flirtation. To touch a woman's hand in wantonness may be to poison her life and yours. The strongest forces of human life are not subjects for idle play. The real heart and soul of a man are measured by the truth he shows to woman. A man's ideal of womanhood is fixed by the woman he seeks. By a man's ideal of womanhood we may know the degree of his manhood.

4. *Precocity.* In the hotbed of modern society there is a tendency to precocious growth. Precocious virtue, as the Sunday-school books used to describe it, is bad enough; but precocious vice is most monstrous. Precocious fruit is not good fruit. The first ripened apples have always a worm at the

core. What is worth having must bide its time. To seize it before its time is to pluck it prematurely.

It may be that "boys will be boys," as people say, but if boys will be boys in a bad sense, they will never be men. The wild oats they sow sprout early and grow fast, and "send their roots into the spinal column, till by and by, to our horror, we find ourselves grown through and through." Our duties to our after selves are more vital than our duties to our present selves, or our duties to society. To guard his own future is the greatest duty the young man owes to society. If all men lived in such fashion that remorse was unknown, the ills of society would mostly vanish. It is our own past deeds which are our real masters.

In the life of the lower animals nature guards against precocity. Among the beasts no one takes to himself the pleasures of life till he can carry its responsibilities. The precocious fish dies in the act of spawning. The old males among polygamous animals — cattle, deer, fur-seals — bar out the young. Their place they must take before they can enjoy it. The female scorns the male who is immature. He must bide his time, and develop his strength in patience.

But the immature child is brought at once among temptations he cannot resist, because he cannot understand them. The gauntlet of obscene sug-

gestions in our cities is one of the most terrible our children have to face. We judge of the wickedness of Pompeii by evil signs and paintings, which the baptism of fire and eighteen centuries of burial have failed to purify. They are still mute witnesses of a personal degeneration toward which they once served to entice. If San Francisco were to be buried to-day, some future generation would judge us thus severely. The bill-boards of the vulgar theatres, with their suggestions of vice and crime, might be mute witnesses to the social decay of our republic. They do not tell the whole story of American life, but their testimony is honest so far as it goes. It is the call to unearned pleasures, the call to degradation, and our children, as they pass, cannot choose but listen.

The children on our streets grow old before their time, and there is no fate more horrible because there is none more hopeless. Were it not for the influx of new life from the farms, our cities would be depopulated. Strive as we may, we cannot save our children from the corrosion of vulgarity and obscene suggestion. The subtle incitement to vice comes to every home. Its effect is shown in precocious knowledge, the loss of the bloom of youth, the quest for pleasures unearned, because sought for out of time.

Vulgarity has in some measure its foundation in precocity. It is an expression of arrested develop-

ment in matters of good taste or good character. To be vulgar is to do that which is not the best of its kind. It is to do poor things in poor ways, and to be satisfied with that. Vulgarity weakens the mind, and thus brings all other weakness in its train. It is vulgar to wear dirty linen when one is not engaged in dirty work. It is vulgar to like poor music, to read weak books, to feed on sensational newspapers, to trust to patent medicines, to find amusement in trashy novels, to enjoy vulgar theatres, to find pleasure in cheap jokes, to tolerate coarseness and looseness in any of its myriad forms. We find the corrosion of vulgarity everywhere, and its poison enters every home. The bill-boards of our cities are covered with its evidences, our newspapers are redolent with it, our story-books reek with it, our schools are tainted by it, and we cannot keep it out of our homes, or our churches, or our colleges.

It is the hope of civilisation that our republic may outgrow the toleration of vulgarity, but that is still a long way in the future. It is said that "vulgarity is the besetting sin of democracy." This one might believe, were it not that the most vulgar city in the world, the one from which vulgarity rises like an exhalation, is one of the least democratic. It is in democracy, the training of the common man, that we can find the only permanent antidote to vulgarity.

The second power of vulgarity is obscenity, and

this vice is like the pestilence. Wherever it finds lodgment it kills. It fills the mind with vile pictures, which will come up again and again, standing in the way of all healthful effort. Those who have studied the life history of the homeless poor tell us that obscenity, and not drink, is the primal cause of the ineffectiveness of most of them. In the ranks of the unemployed, besides the infirm and the unfortunate, is the vast residue of the unemployable. The most of these are rendered so by the utter decay of force which comes from the habit of obscenity. The forces which make for vulgarity tend also toward obscenity, for all inane vulgarity tends to grow obscene. The open door of the saloon makes it a centre of corrosion, and the miserable habit of treating, which we call American, but which exists wherever the tippling-house exists, spreads and intensifies it. There is no great virtue in statutes to keep men sober. I would as soon "see the whole world drunk through choice as sober through compulsion," because compulsion cannot give strength to the individual man. The resistance to temptation must come from within. So far as the drink of drunkards is concerned, prohibition does not prohibit. But to clean up a town, to free it from corrosion, saves men, and boys and girls too, from vice, and who shall say that moral sanitation is not as much the duty of the community as physical sanitation?

The city of the future will not permit the existence of slums and dives and tippling-houses. It will prohibit their existence for the same reason that it now prohibits pig-pens and dung-heaps and cesspools. For where all these things are, slums and cesspools, saloons and pig-pens, there the people grow weak and die.

A form of vulgarity is profanity. This is the sign of a dull, coarse, unrefined nature. There are times, perhaps, when profanity is picturesque and effective. In Arizona sometimes it is so, and I have seen it so in Wyoming. But not indoors nor in the streets nor under normal conditions. It is then simply an insult to the atmosphere which is vulgarised for the purpose. It is not that profanity is offensive to God. He may deal with it in his own way. It is offensive to man and destructive to him. It hurts the man who uses it. "What cometh out of a man defileth him," and the man thus defiled extends his corrosion to others.

5. *Intemperance.* The basis of intemperance is the effort to secure through drugs the feeling of happiness when happiness does not exist. Men destroy their nervous system for the tingling pleasures they feel as its structures are torn apart. There are many drugs which cause this pleasure, and in proportion to the delight they seem to give is the real mischief they work.

Pain is the warning to the brain that something is wrong in the organ in which the pain is felt. Sometimes that which should be felt as pain is interpreted as pleasure. If a man lay his fingers upon an anvil and strike them one by one with a hammer, the brain will feel the shock as pain. It will give orders to have the blows checked.

But if, through some abnormal condition, some twist of the nerves, or clot on the brain, the injury were felt as exquisite delight, there would arise the impulse to repeat it. This would be a temptation. The knowledge of the injury which the eye would tell to the brain would lead the will to stop the blows. The impulse of delight would plead for their repetition, and in this fashion the hand might be sacrificed for a feeling of pleasure, which is no pleasure at all, but a form of mania. Of this character is the effect of all nerve-exciting drugs. As a drop of water is of the nature of the sea, so in its degree is the effect of alcohol, opium, tobacco, cocaine, kola, tea or coffee, of the nature of mania. They give a feeling of pleasure or rest, when rest or pleasure does not exist. This feeling arises from injury to the nerves which the brain does not truthfully interpret.

There have been men in abnormal conditions who felt mutilation as pleasure in the way I have just described. Men have paid others to pinch their bodies, to tear their flesh, to bruise their bones, for

the exquisite delight in self-mutilation. This feeling is the basis for the extraordinary mania which shows itself from time to time among those sects who call themselves Flagellantes and Penitentes. Such extravagance is not religion; it was never translated into sane and helpful life; it is madness, and drunkenness is madness also. Differing in degree and somewhat in kind, it has yet the same original motive, self-destruction, because of the temptation of imaginary pleasure.

To make clear what I have to say, we must consider for a moment the nature of the mind. It is the brain's business to know, to think, to will, and to act. All these functions taken together we call the mind. The brain is hidden in darkness, sheltered within a bony box, and from all the nerves of sense it receives impressions of the outside world and of the conditions of the parts of the body. These impressions are the basis of knowledge. All that we know comes to us in one way or another through the nerves of sense. It is all drawn from our experience of the world through the brain.

These impressions are compared one with another, and brought into relations with past experiences, that the mind may deduce the real truth from them. This is the process of thought, which has many forms and many variations.

The purpose of knowledge is action. When we

see or feel or hear anything, what are we going to do about it? The function of sensation is to enable the body to act safely and wisely. Hence the brain controls the muscles. Hence thought always tends to go over into action. The sense organs are the brain's only teacher. The muscles are its only servants. But there are many orders which can be issued to these servants. There are many sensations and many thoughts, each calling for action, and these actions may be incongruous one with another. How shall the brain choose? This is the function of the will. It is the duty of the will to choose the best action and to suppress all the others. The power of attention enables us to fix the mind on the sensations or impressions of most worth, and to push the others into the background. These competing sensations are not alone those of the present; the memory pictures of all past impressions linger in the brain, and these arise, bidden or unbidden, to mingle with the others. To know the relation of these, to distinguish present impressions from memories, to distinguish recollections from realities, is the condition of sanity. This is mental health, when the machinery of the brain and nerves performs each its appointed task; when the mind is clear, the will strong, the attention persistent, and all is well with the world.

But there are many conditions in which the

machinery of the brain fails. The mind grows confused. It cannot tell memories from realities. Its power of attention flags. A fixed idea, not related to external things, may take possession of the mind, or the will may fail, and the mind may be controlled by a thousand vagrant impressions (really forgotten memory pictures) in as many seconds. In any case, the response of the muscles in action becomes uncertain. The action does not respond to external conditions, but to internal whims. The deeds which result from these whims may be dangerous to the subject himself, or to others. This is a condition of mania, or of mental irresponsibility.

Some phase of mental unsoundness is the natural effect of any of those drugs called stimulants or narcotics. Alcohol gives a feeling of warmth or vigour or exhilaration, when the real warmth or vigour or exhilaration does not exist. Tobacco gives a feeling of rest which is not restfulness. The use of opium seems to intensify the imagination, giving its clumsy wings a wondrous power of flight. It destroys the sense of time and space, but it is in time and space alone that man has his being. Cocaine gives a strength which is not strength. Strychnine quickens the motor response which follows sensation. Coffee and tea, like alcohol, enable one to borrow from his future store of force for present

purposes, and none of these make any provision for paying back the loan. One and all these various drugs tend to give the impression of a power or a pleasure, or an activity, which we do not possess. One and all their function is to force the nervous system to lie. One and all the result of their habitual use is to render the nervous system incapable of ever telling the truth. One and all their supposed pleasures are followed by a reaction of subjective pains as spurious and as unreal as the pleasures which they follow. Each of them, if used to excess, brings in time insanity, incapacity, and death. With each of them, the first use makes the second easier. To yield to temptation, makes it easier to yield again. The weakening effect on the will is greater than the injury to the body. In fact, the harm alcoholic and similar excesses do to the body is wholly secondary. It is the visible reflex of the harm already done to the nervous system.

While all this is true, I do not wish to take an extreme position. I do not care to sit in judgment on the tired woman with her cup of tea, the workman with his pipe or his glass of beer. A glass of claret may sometimes help digestion by a trick on the glands of the stomach. A cup of coffee may give an apparent strength we greatly need. A good cigar may soothe the nerves. A bottle of cool beer on a hot day may be refreshing. A white lie oils the

hinges of society. These things are the white lies of physiology.

I make no attack on the use of claret at dinner, or beer as medicine. This is a matter of taste, though not to my taste. Each of these drugs leaves a scar on the nerves; a small scar, if you please, and we cannot go through the battle of life without many scars of one kind or another. Moderate drinking is not so very bad, so long as it stays moderate. It is much like moderate lying — or, to use Beecher's words, "like beefsteak with incidental arsenic." It will weaken your will somewhat, but may be you are strong enough for that. It was once supposed that intemperance was like gluttony, — the excessive use of that which was good. It was not then known that all nerve-exciters contained a specific poison, and that in this poison such apparent pleasure as they seemed to give must lie.

Use these drugs if you can afford it. There are many worthy gentlemen who use them all in moderation, and who have the strength to abstain from what they call their abuse. You will find among drinkers and smokers some of the best men you know, while some of the greatest scoundrels alive are abstemious to the last degree. They dare not be otherwise. They need all the strength and cunning they have to use in their business. Wine loosens the tongue and lets fly the secrets one has need to hide.

But whatever others may do with seeming impunity, the young man who guards his own future cannot afford to take chances. Whatever you do, let it be of your own free choice. Count all the cost. Take your stand, with open eyes, and hold it without remorse. "With open eyes have I dared it," said Ulrich Von Hutten when he gave up his life for freedom of speech, "and I cherish no regret." The wise man must accept his punishment, if punishment must come, as Hutten did his martyrdom. "With open eyes have I dared it, and cherish no regret."

There is nothing more hopeless than the ineffective remorse of a man who drinks and wishes that he did not. If you don't want to do a thing, then don't do it. The only way to reform is to stop, stop! stop! and go at once to doing something else.

The really "good fellow" can be convivial when he is sober. It is a poor kind of good fellowship which cannot be found till it is saturated with drink.

But whatever you may think or do as to table drinking, the use of beer, coffee, and the like, there is no question as to the evil of perpendicular drinking, or drinking for drink's sake. Men who drink in saloons do so for the most part for the wrench on the nervous system. They drink to forget. They drink to be happy. They drink to be drunk. Sometimes it is a periodical attack of madness. Sometimes it is a chronic thirst. Whichever it is, its indulgence

destroys the soundness of life; it destroys accuracy of thought and action; it destroys wisdom and virtue; it destroys faith and hope and love. It brings a train of subjective horrors, which the terrified brain cannot interpret, and which we call delirium tremens. This is mania, indeed, but every act which injures the faithfulness of the nervous system is a step long or short in this direction.

Some six years ago, in the San Francisco *Examiner*, Mr. Arthur McEwen records the words of an old sailor, called "Longshore Pots," who gave a striking account of what he calls "The Shock." A young man with money and ambition starts out to enjoy life. He is "Hail fellow well met," "afraid of no man," and "nobody's enemy but his own." He frequents the clubs; he plays the races, and he is with the gayest in all gay company. He thinks well of himself; he has a good time, and he knows no reason why others should not think well of him. This goes on for a year or two, when the pace begins to prove too rapid. The "difference in the morning" becomes disagreeable. It interferes with business, it spoils pleasure. The only thing to do is to go still faster. The race down the cocktail route helps to forget. Suddenly the man gets sight of himself. He catches his face in the glass. He sees himself as others see him. Instead of "the jolly good fellow, which nobody can deny," he gets

the glimpse of a useless, helpless sot. He sees a man who has spent his substance, has disgraced his name, has ruined his home, has broken the heart of his wife, has beggared his children, has lost the respect of others, and the respect of himself. This is the Shock! When it has come, he is henceforth good for nothing, for there is no virtue in maudlin remorse; no hope in alcoholic repentance. There is nothing that can save him but to stop, and it takes something of manhood to do this.

Such tears of remorse are not "tears from the depths of some divine despair." They are rather due to the fact that alcohol irritates the lachrymal glands. Harold Frederic's story of Theron Ware is a characteristic study of the deterioration of the good young man who is only "accidentally good," and who has within him neither manliness nor strength when temptation comes in unexpected forms.

With most men sin comes not as a result of strong passion, ungovernable impulses, and revolt against conventions. As with Theron Ware, it is an outcome of weak will, scanty brains, and unchecked selfishness, brought in contact with petty or nasty temptation of corrosion.

It is true that there are cases of another kind. There are some men whose untamable independence leads them into paths of danger simply as a

revolt from tiresome conventionalities. They sin because they will not be tied to the apron strings of society. For these lawless, turbulent, self-defiant spirits, there is always great hope; for when they find themselves entangled in the conventionalities of evil, tied to the apron strings of the devil, they are likely to break away again, and lead lives all the more worthy, because they have found the path of wisdom and strength for themselves. To this class belong the subjects of the great conversions, the real brands who have snatched themselves from the real burnings.

"What a world this would be without coffee," said one old pessimist to another, as they sat and growled together at an evening reception. "What a world it is with coffee," said the other, for he knew that the only solace coffee could give was, that it seemed for the moment to repair the injury its own excessive use had brought. No stimulant or narcotic can ever do more than this. They help us to forget time and space and ourselves, — all we have worth remembering. "With health and a day" man "can put the pomp of emperors to shame." Without time and space he can do nothing. He is nothing.

"There is joy in life," says Sullivan, the pugilist, "but it is known only to the man who has a few jolts of liquor under his belt." To know this

kind of joy is to put oneself beyond the reach of all others.

The joy of the blue sky, the bright sunshine, the rushing torrent, the songs of birds, "sweet as children's prattle is," the breath of the meadows, the glow of effort, the beauty of poetry, the achievement of thought, the thousand and thousand real pleasures of life, are inaccessible to him "who has a few jolts of liquor under his belt," while the sorrows he feels, or thinks he feels, are as unreal as his joys, and as unworthy of a life worth living.

There was once, I am told, a man who came into his office smacking his lips, and said to his clerk, "The world looks very different to the man who has had a good glass of brandy and soda in the morning." "Yes," said the clerk, "and the man looks different to the world."

And this is natural and inevitable, for the pleasure which exists only in imagination leads to action which has likewise nothing to do with the demands of life. The mind is confused, and may be delighted with the confusion, but the confused muscles tremble and halt. The tongue is loosened and utters unfinished sentences; the hand is loosened, and the handwriting is shaky; the muscles of the eyes are unharnessed, and the two eyes move independently and see double; the legs are loosened, and the confusion of the brain shows itself in the confused walk.

And if this confusion is long continued, the mental deterioration shows itself in external things, the shabby hat and seedy clothing, and the gradual drop of the man from stratum to stratum of society, till he brings up some night in the ditch. As the world looks more and more different to him, so does he look more and more different to the world.

A prominent lawyer of Boston once told me that the great impulse to total abstinence came to him when a young man, from hearing his fellow lawyers talking over their cups. The most vital secrets of their clients' business were made public property when their tongues were loosened by wine; and this led my friend to the firm resolution that nothing should go into his mouth which would prevent him from keeping it closed unless he wanted to open it. The time will come when the only opening for the ambitious man of intemperate habits will be in politics. It is rapidly becoming so now. Private employers dare not trust their business to the man who drinks. The great corporations dare not. He is not wanted on the railroads. The steamship lines have long since cast him off. The banks dare not use him. He cannot keep accounts. Only the people, long-suffering and generous, remain as his resource. For this reason, municipal government is his specialty; and while this patience of the people lasts, our cities will breed scandals as naturally as our swamps breed malaria.

Akin to intemperance is the drug habit. I have no desire to indulge in sweeping condemnations. The development of corrective and preventive surgery is one of the glories of modern science. The use of medicines for corrective and preventive purposes is often most wise and necessary; but the constant recourse to drugs for every conceivable purpose is one of the most discouraging features of our civilisation. The vast array of nerve foods, tonics and appetizers have some poisonous stimulant as the basis of their effects. The cures they perform are, for the most part, cheats and impositions, and the final evil results invite fresh attacks from frauds and impostors. There is no agent in the degradation of the American press more potent than the advertisement of the quack doctor. The desire to secure this advertisement leads the paper to pander to the tastes of the fools on whose life blood the medical frauds will feed.

All that a drug can do, for the most part, is to change the stress in the process of life. It can create nothing. It cannot bring health. Health is to the physical body what happiness is to the mind. It is the glow that accompanies normal effort; and this glow must be preceded by effort. No drug can take the place of exercise, and no hysteria of the imagination is a substitute for the sanity of health. The drug habit, and its second stage, patent

medicine habit, and its third stage called mental healing, arise from the desire to make a short cut to health, and thus to happiness. Its continuance is the mark as well as the cause of personal degeneration. It has been said that "civilisation is a disease of the nerves." This is nonsense, as the wisdom, effort, continuity, and virtue on which civilisation depends are matters demanding the most perfect mental health. But a "disease of the nerves" is among civilisation's by-products. The conquests of civilisation, in the hands of incompetents, are as "edged tools in the hands of fools." They furnish effectual means of enforcing the penalties of folly. Whether, in medical matters, one places his faith in the touch of a king or a lunatic, in blessed handkerchiefs or old bones, in a figment of the imagination or in a bottle of cocaine or the oil of celery, the mental attitude is much the same. It is the attitude of skepticism toward knowledge. The philosophy of ignorance is the doubt of the existence of knowledge or skill. Its hope is that of finding without effort the short cut to results which only knowledge and skill give.

A wise teacher of women, Anne Payson Call, has said that always and ever "sham emotions torture, whether they be of love, religion, or liquor." A sham emotion, in this sense, is an impulse or sensation, cultivated for its own sake, with no purpose that it

shall ever be translated into action. This is the "rose pink sentimentalism" so abhorred by Carlyle as "the second power of a lie, the tissue of deceit that has never been and never can be woven into action."

And in the lives of women, in particular, the short cut to happiness through emotionalism is one too often traversed. "Emotional excess," continues Miss Call, "is a woman's form of drunkenness. Nervous prostration is her delirium tremens."

For emotion or sensation to go over into action is to follow the normal law of the mind. To cultivate sensation for sensation's sake, with no purpose beyond it, whether of art, music, love, or religion, is to live a sensuous life, and this is ultimately a life of weakness and decadence. To cultivate emotion without effort at action is to keep the nervous system in a state of excitement as ineffective as the exhilaration of alcohol. The influence of intense sentimentalism and emotional gush, whether religious or secular, is as evil as the influence of liquor, and works in much the same way, a fact to which the wise John Wesley long ago called the attention of his followers.

If religious excitement is used as a source of pleasurable thrills, it is as destructive to the nervous system as any other form of lying that may be forced upon it. The religion which shows itself in

trances, catalepsy, and hysteria is not religion at all, but mania. It is a sign of the softening of the brain, not of the salvation to the soul.

Of like nature is the disposition to live in dreams, to give oneself up to reverie. To live in two worlds at once is to unfit oneself for life in any world. It is to make a short cut to unreal happiness by turning oneself away from the only way to the happiness that now is. There are many other ways in which the evils of short cuts to happiness show themselves. The habit of envy is one of these, the jealousy of the weak for the fortunate, the belief that in some way or another our misery is the work of some one whose patience seems rewarded with prosperity. Many a vagabond looks upon a man with a clean collar as a man who has robbed him, and to make the most of this jealousy is the stock in trade of many of our agitators and politicians. The motive force of much that calls itself social reform is the hope that those who deserve nothing will get something at the next social deal. A social condition which shall not demand personal responsibility is the Utopia of thousands of dreamers.

But the point of all I have to say is this: What is worth having comes at the cost which corresponds to its worth. If the end of life is to enjoy life, we must so live that enjoyment is possible to the end. If the end of life is to help our neighbours, the

conditions remain exactly the same. This is the lesson of human experience as to the search for happiness.

All forms of subjective enjoyment are pleasures that begin and end with self, and are unrelated to external things, are insane and unwholesome, destructive to effectiveness in life and of rational enjoyment. And this is true of spurious emotions alike, whether the pious ecstasies of a half-starved monk, the neurotic excesses of the sentimentalist, or the riots of a debauchee.

It is not for you, taking Kipling's words, "with all your life's work to be done, that you must needs go dancing down the devil's swept and garnished causeway, because forsooth there is a light woman's smile at the end of it." It is not for you to seek strength by hazard or chance. Power has its price, and its price is straight effort.

It is not for you to seek pleasure and strength in drugs, whose only function is to deceive you, whose gifts of life are not so real as your own face in the glass.

It is not for you to believe that idleness brings rest, or that unearned rest brings pleasure. You are young men and strong, and it is for you to resist corrosion, and to help stamp it out of civilised society.

A man ought to be stronger than anything that can happen to him. He is the strong man who can

say *no.* He is the wise man who, for all his life, can keep mind and soul and body clean.

"I know of no more encouraging fact," says Thoreau, "than the ability of a man to elevate his life by conscious endeavour. It is something to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so make a few objects beautiful. It is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look. This morally we can do."

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